

Political Parties

Wilson Chapter 7
AP Government - Mr. Cambou



Come Party With The Political Parties



Political Party Background

- Political Party: A group that seeks to elect candidates to public office by supplying them with a label - a “party identification” - by which they are known to the electorate.
- Although our nation was founded without political parties, a two-party system has evolved from competing factions. The Constitution makes no reference to political parties, and even George Washington denounced them in his farewell address.

Functions of Parties

- Nominate candidates
 - Now primary elections: *candidate-centered, no longer party dominated*
 - Party Conventions (*Democrats - opened up process in 1970 to develop a quota system to ensure young, women and minorities were represented; eliminated winner-reward system in favor of proportional allotment- **Know the reforms of the 1990s***)
- Raise and spend campaign funds
- Register voters
- Simplify voter decisions
- Unify diverse interests: FDR, Reagan (blurs the lines between parties)

Functions of Parties

- Moderating influence on govt.
 - Parties must nominate mods to win election
 - Is this still the case?
- Reduce diffusion of power
 - Parties are supposed to unite
 - Split-ticket voting undermines this (enhanced by office-column vs. party column ballot)
- Provide patronage
- Inform public of party platform

Functions of Parties

- Provide Loyal opposition after election
- *Agents of political socialization (esp. turn of the century)*
- *Links public to government*
- Party Machines
- Ideology Groups
- Solidary groups (camaraderie)
- Sponsored parties (Dems and Unions)

Comparisons With Other Nations

- America is not the only democratic nation that uses political parties, although our parties are the oldest. Political parties in other countries are more effective at mobilizing voters than they are here because of Constitutional decentralization of power.



Comparisons With Other Nations

- In Europe, a multi-party system is used that gives equal opportunity for all parties to be elected into power. However, in the United States, our two-party system often discourages other groups from voicing their opinions on a national level.
- It is very difficult for a third party candidate to be a viable contender in elections.
- Many voters have lost a sense of commitment to party identification.

Advantages to a 2-Party System

- Provides opportunity for those with strong political preference to participate in parties so they don't create factions.
- Membership to a political party does not require as much of a commitment as those of small parties in Europe; no dues must be paid, meetings are not mandatory, and official membership is not required. Americans may be broad and selective in their political beliefs.

Evolution of Political Parties

- (1) The Founding (Jeffersonian Republicans)
- (2) A Stable Two Party System Emerges (Starting w/ Jackson)
- (3) Parties Develop an Organizational Form and Appeal (Civil War era)
- (4) Era of Party Reform and Alteration

6 Party Systems in US

1796-1824	Federalists vs. Jeffersonian Democratic-Republicans
1828-1856	Jacksonian Democrats v Whigs
1860-1892	Republican dominance as the party that fought slavery and put the Union back together
1896-1928	2nd Rep dominance w/ Big Buz and mid class
1932-1964	Dem dominance w/ <i>FDR Coalition (urban dwellers, labor unions, Catholics, Jews, poor, Southerners, Blacks, farmers)</i>
1968-present	Era of divided government

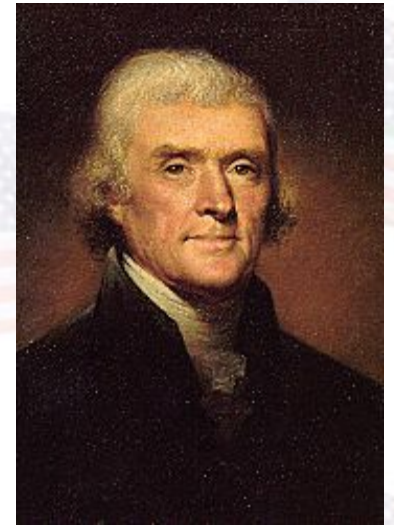
ERA of Divided GOVT

- Split-ticket voting
- Prez one party (typically Rep) and Congress of another (typically Dem)
- Party dealignment = more independents
- Nixon and *Reagan built coalitions of disenchanted white suburban mid class, Southern white protestants*
- Clinton won with FDR coalition

Political Party Origins

Democratic

- Founded in 1792 by Thomas Jefferson, who called it the Democratic-Republican party
- Election of John Quincy Adams in 1824 caused a 4-way split of the party
- In 1828, Andrew Jackson reunited the party, shortening the name to Democratic
- At the end of the 19th century, party leader William Jennings Bryan led a movement of agrarian reformers and supported the right of women's suffrage, a graduated income tax, and direct election of senators



Political Party Origins

Republican

- In 1854, after the Kansas-Nebraska Act, Northern leaders such as Horace Greeley said that a new party was needed.
- The first nominating convention was held in Philadelphia on June 17, 1856.
- Throughout American history the Republican party has been the only third party that has risen to major party status.



Party Logo Origins



- Both the Republican and Democratic party logos originate from a cartoon made by Thomas Nast in 1872.
- The cartoon shows a donkey, representing Ulysses S. Grant, wearing a lion skin scaring away the other animals, including an elephant labeled “The Republican Vote.” Democrats used the possibility of Grant’s 3rd terms to scare voters.



The dog having got at the throat, the crowd about the planks, and several efforts to diground all the wooden boards to see what is the foundation! (Illustration by B. Smith)

Parties Today- Weakened

- Lack strong rank and file (more ind. Today)
- Tension between party regulars and issue purists/
candidate loyalists (ie New Right and Deaniacs)
- Not responsive to social reform
- Loss of traditional functions (nominations and
funding campaigns)
- Decentralized
- Progressive Reforms: (*direct primaries; 17th
Amendment- Popular election of senators;
Nonpartisan elections*)

Third Parties

- Many people aren't satisfied with the 2 main parties - they feel that Democrats and Republicans don't truly represent their views and interests.
- Issue oriented; Doctrinal; Leader Driven (Perot's Reform party, TR's Bull Moose)
- Some third parties disappear when the major parties take up their cause. (Populist Party and direct election of Senators, income tax reform)
- Third parties often help decide who wins the presidential election (1992 and 2000).
- Hurt by *single-member, winner take all districts and electoral college winner-take-all system*

The First Third Party Movements

- In 1806, Virginia's John Randolph formed the first ever third party, saying that he and his supporters were neither Hamiltonians nor Jeffersonians but a “third something” - a “tertium quid”.
- The first major third party movement was made by the Anti-Masonic party, who were a product of the breakdown between the first two-party system.

Other Third Party Movements

- Republicans - emerged in 1854 as the first third party that has gained major party status
- Bull Moose - started by Theodore Roosevelt while he campaigned for president in 1912, this divided many Republicans and enabled Woodrow Wilson to win
- Reform - started in 1992 by Ross Perot, and was highly effective in the '92-'96 presidential elections



More Third Party Movements

- Greens - against corporate donations to parties and have been credited for Gore's loss/Bush's win in 2000
- Libertarians - believe that all people have an inalienable set of rights that cannot be annulled, given up or taken away in the interests of a larger group.



Minor Parties

- Tertium Quids (1801-1808)
- Antimasonic Party (1827-35)
- Workingmen's Parties (1828-1832)
- Equal Rights or "Loco-Foco" Party (1836-1837)
- Liberty Party (1839-1847)
- National Reform Party (1844-1891)
- Antirenter Party (1845-1847)
- Nativism (1845-1850)
- Free Soil Party (1848-1849)
- American Party (1850-1860)
- Free Democratic Party (1849-1854)
- Republican Party (1854 on)
- National Labor Reform Party (1871-1872)
- Equal Rights Party (1872)
- Liberal Republicans (1870-1872)
- Prohibitionist Party (1872-1920)
- Social Democratic or Workingmen's Party (1874-1876)
- National, Independent, or "Greenback" Party (1875-1878)
- Workingmen's Party (1876-1878)
- Socialistic Labor Party (1878-1888)
- Liberal Party (1878-1880)
- ...and many more

